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bone or horn knife, *haviuyak*, used for chopping up the snow for the cooking-pot, never, as far as we know, had a copper blade. The adze figured in Plate VIII would probably have had in actual use a protecting band of seal-skin under the lashings to prevent them from being cut through. I am not sure whether harpoons like the one figured in Plate IX ever had copper shanks; normally that portion of the weapon was of caribou antler. The seal-indicator, to be complete, should have a small round disc near the bottom, although this feature is occasionally lacking. The remaining specimens seem not to differ from the genuinely old types scattered in different museums throughout America.

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THE CLASSIFICATION OF AMERICAN LANGUAGES

THE recent article by Dr. Boas (*American Anthropologist*, n.s., vol. 22, pp. 367 et sq.) is a discussion of the theoretical point of view one should adopt in classifying American languages. On the whole I am very much in sympathy with his remarks: see my paper on American languages in the *Journal of the Washington Academy of Sciences* (vol. VII, pp. 222 et sq., 1917). But there is one point which I think Dr. Boas overlooks when discussing the borrowing of morphological features, admitting that he has made it very plausible that a number of borrowings occur where they had not been previously suspected. And this is that, if the morphological resemblances between two supposedly distinct but contiguous stocks were entirely due to borrowings, by the doctrine of chances we should expect to find similar borrowings in another supposedly distinct but contiguous stock. And this is demonstrably not the case in at least certain instances. Thus Athapascan, so far as we know, has been in just as intimate contact for a very long period with Salishan and Esquimaquan as with Tlingit; but there is not the slightest resemblance structurally between Athapascan, Salishan, and Esquimaquan. On the other hand admittedly there is a very decided structural resemblance between Athapascan and Tlingit, even if the amount of vocabulary held in common is very small. Or again, Algonquian has been in just as intimate contact with Iroquoian, Siouan, and Muskhogean for at least several hundred years as it has with Esquimaquan. Yet structurally Esquimaquan and Algonquian resemble each other, and similarly Siouan and Muskhogean: but observe that the first pair does not resemble the second pair nor does either member of the first group resemble either one of the second. Similar cases occur in the Southwest and also Northwest.

Now if the above were entirely due to borrowing we should expect to find resemblances equally distributed where the supposedly distinct stocks are contiguous. If the resemblances are confined to one or two features, they may safely be ascribed to acculturation; but when there are far-reaching structural resemblances between two or more supposedly distinct (and especially contiguous) stocks we may legitimately infer an ancient genetic connection which perhaps can no longer be proved owing to very early differentiation. The actual application of the above principle on a large scale is quite another thing. We are probably not yet in a position to make final announcement of such ancient genetic connections, though tentative results might properly be made public. The recent efforts to prove genetic connections on a large scale have been deplorable from a methodological point of view. Enthusiasts have cast all prudence to the winds; still their work has not been entirely in vain, for they have at least called attention to problems which must be faced sooner or later.

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SOME CRITICISMS OF CURTIS'S "SONGS FROM THE DARK CONTINENT"

IN the recently published *Songs from the Dark Continent* by Natalie Curtis (Schirmer, 1920) we find an anachronism quite surprising in this day of scientific exactness. The cover design, the illustrations of textiles, of carved figures and other objects, are all taken from materials found among the Bushongo, a tribe located just south of the Congo River and east and north of the Kassai, while the songs and the young men eulogized are of the Ndaу and Zulu tribes. The Ndaу is a small tribe in Portuguese East Africa near the coast, and the Zulu are farther south. There is such a great distance between the Bushongo and these east-coast tribes that there is not the least justification for using such illustrative material. The art work of the Bushongo is entirely distinctive, and if it is shared by other tribes that fact has not been recorded. The report of Torday and Joyce is our main source of information on the Bushongo.

The ivory work of the Mangbettu, considerably to the northeast of the Bushongo, also represents a high development, but very different in design and technique. There are no correspondences between the products of the two peoples so far as exhibited specimens indicate.

The early Bantu migrations are now so distant in time and so mythical